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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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10/800,652

03/16/2004

Wai Hing Lai

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01/14/2005

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EXAMINER

FIGUEROA, FELIX O

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2833

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

|                              |                                      |                                   |  |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | <b>Application No.</b><br>10/800,652 | <b>Applicant(s)</b><br>LAI ET AL. |  |
|                              | <b>Examiner</b><br>Felix O. Figueroa | <b>Art Unit</b><br>2833           |  |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 16 March 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)            |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>06/18/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Specification***

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "comprising" and "the," should be avoided.

The incorporation by reference of US Patent Application 10/770,512 (filed Feb. 4, 2004) is noted. However, the addition of such application as an Appendix appears to be superfluous and redundant.

### ***Drawings***

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(h)(2) because they include elements in the same view that are not proportional with each other. It appears that Figure 1 should be two separate figures.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the grounding plates, as required by claims 8-10, must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR

1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sinopoli (US 3,049,688) in view of Lau et al. (US 5,568,942).

Sinopoli discloses an electrical accessory (Fig.2) comprising engageable first (10) and second body members (19,20,21), the first body member including a receiving portion (26) adapted to be releasably engageable with a plug member (not labeled in Fig.1) of an electric cord of an electric appliance (col.1 line 15), the second body member (20) including a first plug member (21) being electrically connectable with an electricity mains supply (not shown, col.2 lines 15-17), a second member (ends of 19) adapted be engageable with the first body member and an electric cord (20) electrically connecting the first and second plug members, and a securing means (35) for securing the first body member to a surface (col.2 lines 53-55).

Sinopoli discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the first and second body members being releasable engageable. Lau teaches first and second

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body members (98 and 2) being releasably engageable, the second member (2) having a first plug member (4) connectable with an electricity mains supply, and a second plug member (6) adapted to be releasably engageable (by a magnet, col. 3 lines 25-30) with the first body member (98) to prevent the first body member from being turned over when the second body is accidentally pulled (col. 1 lines 24-35). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the second member of the second body member as a plug that can be releasably engageable with the first body, as taught by Lau, to prevent the first body member from being turned over when the second body is accidentally pulled.

Regarding claim 2, Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses the second plug member being connectable with the first body member by a magnetic force (see Lau, col. 3 lines 25-30).

Regarding claim 3, Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses the second plug member being dis-connectable from the first body member upon pulling of and/or accidental tripping over the electric cord (see Lau, col. 1 lines 24-35).

Regarding claim 5, Sinopoli discloses the securing means being a suction cup (35).

Regarding claim 6, Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses substantially the claimed invention except for length of the electric cord. To the extent that Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, does not specify exact dimension (length of the cord), workable dimensions of the of the electric cord would have been a matter of routine experimentation to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention. In re

Antonie, 559 F.2d 618 (CCPA 1977). Please note that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an electric cord of at least three feet in order to reach a particular wall outlet.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sinopoli in view of Lau et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Glass (US 6,004,157).

Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses substantially the claimed invention except for securing means being a clamp. Glass teaches securing means in the form of a clamp (36) to provide a rugged and reliable connection (col.2 lines 51-53). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the securing means of Sinopoli as a clamp, as taught by Glass, to provide a rugged and reliable connection.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sinopoli in view of Lau et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Karabakakis (US 4,647,120).

Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the ground pin. Karabakakis teaches a plug member (47) including a ground pin (52). The use of a ground pin provides current dissipation under fault conditions, and thus a more secure connector. Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a second plug member including a ground pin, as taught by Karabakakis, to dissipate current under fault conditions and thus provide a more secure connector.

Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sinopoli in view of Lau et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lee et al. (US 6,328,581).

Sinopoli, as modified by Lau, discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the ground plates. Lee teaches a plug member (Figs. 8A and 8B) including ground plates (141,142) on opposite sides of the plug member and being engaged with a first body (2). The use of ground plates, when use with a corresponding counterpart socket, provides current dissipation under fault conditions, and thus a more secure connector. Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a second plug member including a ground pin, as taught by Lee, to dissipate current under fault conditions and thus provide a more secure connector.

### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Dalmau et al. (US 6,623,276), Sri-Jayantha (US 5,941,729) and Ke (US 6,109,958) disclose releasably engageable connectors.

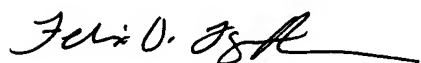
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Felix O. Figueroa whose telephone number is (571) 272-2003. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri., 10:00am-6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 Ext. 33. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ffr

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Felix D. J. R.", followed by a long horizontal flourish.